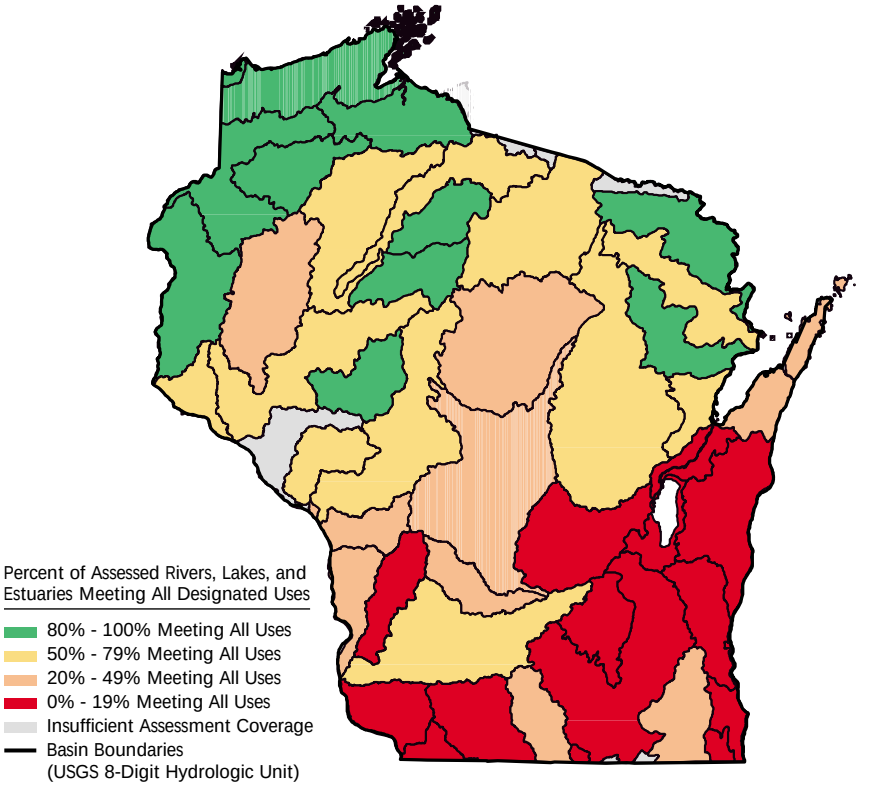
Wisconsin



For a copy of the Wisconsin 1998 305(b) report, contact:

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Surface Water Quality

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) found that 31% of the assessed river miles fully support aquatic life uses, 25% support these uses now but are threatened, 36% partially support aquatic life uses, and 8% do not support aquatic life uses. The most prevalent problems in rivers are habitat and flow alterations, siltation, excessive nutrients, pathogens, thermal modifications, and oxygen-depleting substances. The sources of these problems are often polluted runoff, especially in agricultural areas, and river modifications, such as channelization, dam construction, and the loss of vegetation alongside streams. Municipal wastewater discharges also impair more than 1,590 miles of streams, and industrial discharges more than 1,250 miles.

About 37% of the assessed lake acres fully support aquatic life uses, 3% support these uses but are threatened, 55% partially support these uses, and 6% do not support aquatic life uses. The primary source of lake degradation is deposition of airborne pollutants, especially mercury, and polluted runoff. All of Wisconsin's Great Lakes' shoreline partially supports fish consumption use due to fish consumption advisories posted throughout the Great Lakes.

Wisconsin did not report on the condition of wetlands.

Ground Water Quality

The primary sources of ground water contamination in Wisconsin are agricultural activities, municipal landfills, leaking underground storage tanks, abandoned hazardous waste sites, and spills. Other sources include septic tanks and land application of wastewater. Nitrate-nitrogen is the most common ground water contaminant. Nitrates come from fertilizers, animal waste storage sites and feedlots, municipal and industrial wastewater and sludge disposal, refuse disposal areas, and leaking septic systems.

Programs to Restore Water Quality

WDNR is integrating multiple agencies, programs, interests, and jurisdictions in an "ecosystem approach" that looks at all parts of the ecosystem when addressing water quality—the land that drains to the waterbody, the air above it, the plants, animals, and people using it. Since the 1970s, WDNR has prepared water quality management plans for each of the state's river basins that summarize the condition of waters in each basin, identify improvements and needs, and make recommendations for cleanup or protection. WDNR updates the plans every 5 years and uses the plans to rank watersheds for priority projects under the Wisconsin Nonpoint Source Water Pollution Abatement Program and to address wastewater discharge concerns.

Programs to Assess Water Quality

In 1992, Wisconsin implemented a surface water monitoring strategy to support river basin planning. The strategy integrates monitoring and management activities in each of the state's river basins on the 5-year basin planning schedule. In recent years, Wisconsin has placed more emphasis on monitoring polluted runoff and toxic substances in bottom sediments and tissues of fish and wildlife.

– Not reported in a quantifiable format or unknown.

Individual Use Support in Wisconsin

Designated Use[a]	Percent				
	Good (Fully Supporting)	Good (Threatened)	Fair (Partially Supporting)	Poor (Not Supporting)	Not Attainable
Rivers and Streams (Total Miles = 57,698)[b]					
Total Miles Assessed					
22,854	31	25	36	8	<1
3,779	75	3	18	4	<1
-	-	-	-	-	-
Lakes (Total Acres = 982,155)					
Total Acres Assessed					
64,510	37	3	55	6	-
105,596	59	0	0	41	-
54,771	25	5	63	6	-
Great Lakes (Total Shore Miles = 1,017)					
Total Shore Miles Assessed					
1,017	0	79	21	0	0
1,017	0	0	100	0	0
-	-	-	-	-	-

[a] A subset of Wisconsin's designated uses appear in this figure. Refer to the state's 305(b) report for a full description of the state's uses.
[b] Includes nonperennial streams that dry up and do not flow all year.

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.